

# BOILER EXPLOSION TORE SHIP APART

## COL. ASTOR MET DEATH WITH SMILE AFTER WIFE WAS SAFELY OFF SHIP

Isidor Straus Begged Wife to Get Into Boat, but She Clung to Him and Refused to Live if He Must Die.

The calm heroism with which Col. John Jacob Astor went to his death was described to an Evening World reporter by James Johnson, one of the members of the crew of the Titanic, who was on duty in the first cabin when the crash came.

"I saw Col. Astor go on deck with his young wife," said Johnson, "soon after the crash. As the lifeboats were lowered he advanced to one of the officers and asked if he might accompany Mrs. Astor. Informed that he could not, that the women and children would have to be taken off first, Col. Astor smiled and kissed his wife, then stepped back and lifted his hat. There wasn't a calmer man on the whole ship. Until the boat bearing his wife away had been completely lost to sight Col. Astor stood there apparently unexcited and waved a good-by."

The last survivor to speak to Col. J. J. Astor was Alfred Whitman, the Titanic's barber. Whitman tells a story that bears out the belief, general since it first was known that Col. Astor was among the missing, that the multi-millionaire and sportsman went to his death as a brave man should.

"I shaved Col. Astor on Sunday afternoon," said Whitman. "He was a pleasant, affable man, and that awful night, when I found myself standing beside him on the passenger deck helping to put the women into the boats, I spoke to him. He had just put Mrs. Astor into a boat further down the deck, and even in the dim light on the deck I could see he was deathly pale. But he was calm, and his hand, as he struck a match to light his cigar, didn't tremble."

BIDS BARBER GOOD-BY, BUT SAYS "I'LL STICK."

The last boat pushed away and the ship began to slant down toward the bow. I had a lifebelt on, but the Colonel didn't have one.

"Where is your lifebelt?" I asked him. "I didn't think there would be any need of it," he said. "Get one while there is time," I told him. "The last boat is gone and we are done for."

"No," he said, "I think there are some lifeboats to be launched, and we may get on one of those." "There are no lifeboats," I told him, and the ship is going to sink. I am going to jump overboard and take a chance on swimming out and being picked up by one of the boats. Better come along."

"No, thank you," he said, calmly. "I think I'll hang on." "I asked him if he would mind shaking hands with me. He said, 'With pleasure,' gave me a hearty grip, and then I climbed up on the rail and jumped overboard. I was in the water nearly four hours before one of the boats picked me up."

Johnson said he also present and overheard Mrs. Isidor Straus when she refused to leave her husband, telling him that if the ship was sinking she would die with him.

MRS. STRAUS WOULDN'T LEAVE HUSBAND.

"It was the most pitiful spectacle I ever witnessed," said Johnson. "Mrs. Straus pleaded with the old lady to go into one of the boats, but she threw her arms about his neck half hysterically and refused to leave his side. I had been ordered to one of the oars in lifeboat No. 2 and saw the elderly couple plainly still embracing as the little craft I was in was pushed away." Johnson said as near as he could judge it was about 11:40 P. M. when the Titanic struck the iceberg.

"A great many of the passengers had retired," he added, "but there were still a number in the restaurant, on the deck and in the salons. The night was one of the most perfect I have ever seen; the stars were out and we were proceeding as if nothing had happened. In fact, I don't believe the majority of the passengers actually knew we had met with an accident. There seemed to be a low, rumbling sound, as if the ship's bottom were scraping something. Absolute quietness pervaded the entire ship for fully ten minutes after the collision with the iceberg. As soon as the officers began shouting for the members of the crew to come on deck, however, there started a feeling of uneasiness. Every one knew then that we had struck something, but were unable to tell what it was for the moment."

"There was no panic; in fact, very little excitement of any kind, as everybody felt that the Titanic was unshakable. The officers assured all that there was no danger, and a number of those who had retired and come to the decks after the first impact to inquire what was the matter returned to their staterooms."

BAND PLAYS AS LIFEBOATS ARE LOWERED.

"The band began playing soon after the crash. Orders were then given to prepare the lifeboats. For the first time some of the passengers then began to realize that something serious had happened. But without they were calm. A few of the men made a rush for the first lifeboats lowered, but were quickly eased when the officers stood by with

drawn revolvers and quietly told them to move back or they would be shot. Later a small group of men persisted in climbing into one of the lifeboats, and the officers fired their revolvers in the air to frighten them."

"For the most part," he continued, "the men stood back gallantly, some of them even smiling and offering words of cheer to the women folk. Mrs. Straus was offered a place in the first boat, but turned away tearfully, saying she would remain with her husband to the last."

According to Johnson, a woman named one of the oars in the lifeboat was in.

"As we drew away from the big ship she began to lurch, and within a very few minutes it seemed as if scores of persons were being swept overboard. I am satisfied that very few persons were killed on the vessel. Capt. Smith himself, as near as I was able to see, was swept off the bridge to his death."

Johnson declared he saw one of the last lifeboats lowered twist and turn turtle. There were a number of men and women in it, he said, and apparently they were all drowned.

"It seemed for a time as if the whole sea about us was strewn with bodies," he said in conclusion. "With life belts around them and eyes glistening for the most part, one would have thought most of them alive."

"It was about daybreak when we first caught sight of the Carpathia. We had to pull five or six miles, and when we came alongside of her canvas bags were lying lowered for the children and a ladder for the rest of us."

Washington Dodge, millionaire financier of San Francisco, with his wife and six-year-old son, were among those saved from the wrecked ship.

"There was no panic of any description, except in the steerage. I saw two frenzied men shot down by officers as they tried to fight their way into a lifeboat. That was the only outbreak I saw."

"Mrs. Isidor Straus could have been saved, for there was plenty of room in the lifeboats for her. The officers went to her and told her to take her place. She asked if her husband was to go. When told only the women would be taken on board, she threw her arms around Mr. Straus's neck and kissed him. She turned to the officers and told them she was going to stay with her husband. The dear woman died there, too, rather than leave her husband."

"Major Archibald Butt and Col. John Jacob Astor died like the two heroes they were. From the instant the ship struck the berg until she foundered those two brave men were everywhere. They helped women into lifeboats, calmed excited men, assisted the officers in every way, and stood aside like men as the boats were being lowered, so that all the women might be saved. And, though I did not see their actual deaths, I will believe to my dying day that neither Major Butt nor Col. Astor showed the slightest sign of fear, even as the water closed over them. They weren't that kind. Those two men were heroes if two her ever lived."

Washington Dodge was one of the most picturesque personages saved from the Titanic. It was he who acted in conjunction with Garvin McNabb,

Mrs. John Jacob Astor, Bride, Who Was Forced From Husband



MRS. JOHN JACOB ASTOR.

## MRS. ASTOR DOES NOT BELIEVE HER HUSBAND IS LOST

She and Colonel's Son Hope He Was Picked Up After Carpathia Left.

Youth and strength have served Mrs. John Jacob Astor well in her bereavement. Although she is still under the care of doctors and a nurse, Miss Brock, she is rapidly recovering from the shock and exposure attendant upon her terrible experience on the Titanic.

After leaving the pier last night Mrs. Astor went first to the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Force, at No. 15 East Thirty-seventh street. Her visit there was brief. She was driven then to her own home at No. 54 Fifth avenue.

Vincent Astor, her step-son, received visitors at the house to-day. He said Mrs. Astor had not left her room and was still weak and shaken after her experience, but needed only rest and quiet.

"Neither Mrs. Astor nor myself believe that my father is dead," said the young man. "We hope he was picked up by some vessel that arrived at the scene of the disaster during the night or the early morning. We will not give up this hope unless the death of my father is settled beyond all question."

The offices of the Astor estate were closed to-day. Of course nothing had been done about fixing a will or taking the initiative steps toward settling Col. Astor's estate. It is generally believed that Mrs. Astor's marriage settlement, which gave her dower rights, and that the bulk of the estate will go to Vincent Astor and the daughter who is living with the first Mrs. Astor in London. Any issue of Col. Astor's second marriage would come in for the legal share of the immense property holdings of the head of the family.

ASTOR'S LAST PUBLIC SERVICE CONCERNED FIRE HEROES.

In view of the manner in which Col. Astor met his death, it is interesting to recall the last public service he performed before going abroad on his honeymoon trip. In company with Philip Rhineland and R. A. C. Smith, he acted on a committee to select the names of the police heroes to be inscribed on the tablet set for that purpose in the walls of Police Headquarters.

The meeting between Mrs. Astor, her elder sister Katherine and Vincent Astor on the pier following the arrival of the Carpathia last night was one of the many pathetic features of that occasion. Long before the Carpathia reached her dock Miss Force was on the pier waiting for the youthful widow.

Miss Force, accompanied by Vincent Astor, son of Col. Astor and principal heir to the great Astor fortune, had been waiting anxiously for more than an hour for the arrival of the rescue ship. With them were Mrs. E. B. Cragin of No. 19 West Fifth street, and R. B. Kimball of No. 15 East Fifty-fourth street, and a small group of friends. A report had been circulated that young Mrs. Astor was seriously ill, and the physicians were on hand in case the report proved true.

The little group stood near the dark

cabin gangplank and studied the faces of the survivors as they came off. Young Astor edged his way through the great surging crowd of impatient humanity that lined the pier, while Miss Force, fearful, but stoic-like, kept her eyes intently upon him for word of her sister.

FIRST INQUIRY IS AS TO HER HUSBAND.

It was not the vivacious, rosy-cheeked young woman the newspaper men had come to know so well during the days of Col. Astor's romantic courtship, but a sad-faced and unhappy looking woman who walked slowly down the gangplank and all but swooned when she leaned on the arm of Vincent Astor.

Not a word was spoken by either Mrs. Astor, clad in a plain white shirtwaist and dark skirt, with a light blue veil covering her head and wearing loosely about her shoulders a brown fur boa, moved as one in a trance. Her large eyes were filled with tears, and she seemed to be gazing into space as one whose heart had been overtaken with sorrow. Indeed, while her maid assured the attending physician that Mrs. Astor's health was all that could be expected under the circumstances, the young woman appeared to have grown many years older than when she sailed for Europe with her husband.

"IT WAS TOO AWFUL," SAYS MRS. FRANK, ONE OF THE SURVIVORS.

Mrs. Fanny Kelly was the first of the second cabin passengers of the Titanic to come up through the second cabin gangway of the Carpathia. She was with another rescued woman, who said she was Mrs. M. Frank, a name which does not appear on the passenger list. Both women, clad in nondescript garb given them on the Carpathia, were hysterically grasping each other about the waist and alternately laughing and crying.

A young man approached them. Mrs. Frank threw herself into his arms. "Don't ask me anything about it," she said to him. "Don't ask me anything about it! It was too awful!" It was several minutes before he could quiet her and lead her away.

Chinamen Aboard Carpathia.

The United States Immigration Board learned to-day that there were six Chinese among the Titanic survivors. There had been eight Chinamen on the White Star liner. They were taken in charge until their right to enter this country could be verified.

Lucien B. Smith, son-in-law of Congressman Hughes of West Virginia, made his bride a few weeks a widow with a smile on his lips. As they approached one of the lifeboats together, Mrs. Smith pleaded hysterically that her husband be allowed to step into the boat with her. Capt. Smith, who was standing by superintending the work of filling and lowering away the lifeboats, turned to Mrs. Smith and said, "No madam, under no circumstances will any man be permitted to leave this boat. 'Good boy, Captain,' said Smith, patting the captain on the shoulder, and the bride saw the last of her husband's face.

Henry B. Harris, theatrical manager and producer of some of the most popular comedies of past seasons, remained with his wife for the first confusing moments after the shock of the collision was felt. Neither he nor Mrs. Harris felt that there was real danger, but when the order came from Capt. Smith that all women and children must take to the boats, Harris escorted his wife to one nearest to them. A ship's officer raised his hand and motioned Harris back, saying that the women must have precedence. "Well, I'll take my medicine," Harris said smilingly to his wife, and stepped back out of the way of the women who were pressing toward the boat.

LONDON MOURNERS BE-SIEGE OFFICES OF WHITE STAR LINE.

LONDON, April 19.—Pitiable scenes were again witnessed at the White Star offices here to-day. One woman who had kept vigil every day and most of the night since the first news of the disaster came found in the list posted at the office the name she had been waiting for and rushed into the street shrieking "He is saved!"

Memorial services for the dead were held at noon in St. Paul's Cathedral and were attended by the members of the Cabinet and of the Diplomatic Corps, among whom were Ambassador Whitehead Reid and Mrs. Reid and other distinguished personages. The White Star Company and the International Mercantile Marine Company were also represented.

A memorial service is to be held in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on Sunday.

TO PAY TRIBUTE TO STEAD.

Hundreds of delegates to the Men and Religion Congress, who were to have listened to an address by William T. Stead, the English journalist, lost in the Titanic disaster, to-day joined in memorial services for Mr. Stead at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Stead's death came as

LONDON RELIEF FUND REACHES \$250,000; \$5,000 CABLED HERE.

LONDON, April 19.—The relief fund which has been opened for the assistance of those thrown into distress by the disaster to the Titanic now amounts to \$250,000.

The Earl of Derby, Lord Mayor of Liverpool, in response to an urgent request from New York for assistance for the survivors among the third class passengers, to-day cabled \$5,000.

ASKS IN HANDBILL FOR NEWS ABOUT CHARLES L. CHAPMAN.

Long before the Carpathia was warped into her berth Charles L. Chapman of No. 1231 Plymouth avenue, buyer for the Western Equipment Company of No. 123 West street, appeared on the Cunard pier with a large stack of handbills.

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